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C O N F I D E N T I A L USOSCE 000135

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OSD FOR ISA (PERENYI)

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TAGS: [KCFE](#) [OSCE](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: CFE: MAY 20 JCG PLENARY: RUSSIA WANTS GUARANTEES
ON NAC STATEMENT

Classified By: Chief Arms Control Delegate Hugh Neighbour,
for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

11. (SBU) Summary: At the May 20 JCG Plenary, Russia dissected the 28 March NAC Statement on CFE in a futile attempt to draw Allies into interpreting and discussing the details of the text. Russia complained that the NAC statement had few specifics on ratification of A/CFE, accession, the definition of "substantial combat forces," and equipment ceilings and offered Russia no guarantees in return for its compliance. Russia wanted detailed discussion on the specifics of the NAC statement and the parallel actions package in the JCG. Turkey and Germany reminded Russia that the NAC statement was a high level political offer by NATO members. Belarus opposed discussion of the definition of "substantial combat forces" only by NATO and Russia but instead wanted the discussion in the JCG where it was a participant. Russia planned to bring up for discussion at the next JCG meeting the NATO 1998 Statement on CFE, asking NATO States Parties to reaffirm it, in particular the term "substantial combat forces."

12. (C) At the JCG-T plus 4, Turkey briefed Allies on its CFE consultations with Russian DFM Kislyak, including recent Russian public statements for expanding the "flank" area to include all of Russia (within the AoA). Germany wanted to engage with Russia on the 28 March NAC Statement, but Allies concluded that it would be best to avoid too detailed a discussion. Allies agreed to continue with the normal JCG meeting schedule, but could cancel the meetings for practical reasons. Washington see paragraphs 10, and 112. End Summary.

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PLENARY: GUARANTEES AND PROMISES
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13. (SBU) At the May 20 JCG (Joint Consultative Group) under the Chairmanship of Iceland, Russian representative (Ulyanov) informed Allies that Russia sees positive aspects of the 28 March NAC Statement on CFE, but also believes it is imbalanced and too vague with not enough detail. Ulyanov commented that the statement was an "actions for promises" offer with no guarantees that Russia would get

anything in return for its compliance. Ulyanov detailed four specific concerns:

-NATO is only offering to "move forward" towards ratification while Russia is required to take steps with respect to Georgia and Moldova; what does "move forward" mean? How long will it take? How soon can countries complete ratification? When will countries deposit their instrument of ratification? Is there going to be provisional application if there is a delay in ratification?

-NATO only promised to discuss accession of the Baltics and Slovenia. There is no guarantee of mutual agreement. An agreement on this could be difficult due to probably differing views on territorial ceilings and the flank region.

-There is no guarantee that the term "substantial combat forces" will be defined. The NAC statement only stipulates that NATO and Russia will develop a definition.

-What does "changes to the level of equipment ceilings" mean? Is it a reduction or an increase? What do the changes consist of? What timeframe?

¶4. (SBU) Ulyanov scoffed at the idea that Russia would lift its "suspension" in return for such vague promises in the NAC statement. He declared that the JCG needed to discuss the details of the NAC statement in order to provide for guarantees that would enable the parallel actions package to be agreed to "in the right time." He then accused the forum of not being willing to tackle the core

issue to enable the Treaty to overcome the current crisis. Additionally, Ulyanov questioned whether Estonia intended to increase its holdings of TLE and mentioned that one State Party (unnamed) in November indicated that it wanted to depart from the intent of the NATO December 1998 statement.

¶5. (SBU) Germany (Richter) responded by reminding Russia that the 28 March NAC Statement and the Bucharest Summit Declaration of 3 April came from the highest political level. NATO's commitments are similar to that of the Istanbul commitments. Although the timeline of actions still needed to be harmonized, the NAC statement is "promises for promises." To counter each of Ulyanov's complaints, Richter opined that NATO States Parties' political intention is to ratify and adhere to A/CFE following signature of the parallel actions package, that the Baltics and Slovenia have promised to accede to A/CFE would consult with the Allies and Russia. Richter suggested a discussion in the JCG of Treaty terms, to include permanent stationing, headroom, ceilings, etc., and offered to provide a historical analysis of the term "substantial combat forces" in the JCG (Note: Richter raised this issue in the JCG-T plus 4. USDEL and others cautioned Richter to limit discussion of this topic to Allies only. End Note). Richter also commented that though it is not specifically stated in the NAC text on equipment ceilings, reduction is implied. It is the only realistic interpretation in light of equipment level trends and the current European security situation.

¶6. (SBU) Ulyanov stated that he was delighted at the Russia - Germany "professional" dialogue, but that Richter's statement was from a national perspective and wondered what NATO's positions were on Russia's concerns. Ulyanov then complained that the parallel actions package required Russia to take specific actions on Georgia and Moldova while no details on the Baltics' accession or "substantial combat forces." Russia needed "clarity," "clean-cut commitments spelled out."

PLENARY: WE'RE LITTLE BUT DON'T FORGET US!

¶7. (SBU) Luxembourg (Pilot) voiced its support for Germany's intervention. With reference to the NAC text on equipment ceilings, Pilot confessed that although Luxembourg currently had no TLE on its territory, in the near future, it will increase its national holding of ACVs to its current limit (40) so that its peacekeeping forces could participate better in exercises and operations. Pilot hoped that this would not cause concern for Russia.

¶8. (SBU) In predictable fashion, Belarus (Pavlov) commented that he was happy to see "structured dialogue" emerging in the forum and echoed Russia's call for specifics to be discussed in the JCG. Pavlov said that negotiations of the parallel actions package should not prevent detailed work on its aspects in the JCG. To buttress his point that details should be worked on in the JCG, Pavlov objected to the NAC text that called for only NATO and Russia to develop a definition for the term "substantial combat forces." He complained that his country too had interests in the definition.

¶9. (SBU) Turkey (Begec) stated that NATO's position is in the March 28 NAC Statement and that "equal ambiguity" is written in the parallel action package for both sides. Begec pointed out that NATO equipment ceilings trend has been downward and that the Alliance's position on the term "substantial combat forces" has not changed since NATO statements made in December 1996, March 1997, and most recently in December 1998. Begec challenged Russia to make a commitment at the political level similar to that of the NAC commitment by issuing a text at an equal level.

¶10. (SBU) Ulyanov informed all that at the next JCG meeting he would bring up for discussion the NATO 1998 Statement on CFE, asking NATO States Parties to reaffirm it, in particular, the term "substantial combat forces."

¶11. (SBU) Under AOB, the Chair raised the issue of postponing the June 24 JCG (HLTF date) and cancellation of the July 1 JCG (ASRC date). On the margins, the next chair (Negro, Italy) asked USDEL about holding a JCG on Friday, June 27 to avoid cancelling two JCG meetings in a row.

¶12. (C) Comment: In the JCG Ulyanov mentioned that there were different versions of the parallel actions package, telling some that Russia has a different version. Other delegations had also expressed similar concerns. It would be helpful for USDEL to provide the latest version to our Allies. End Comment.

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JCG-T plus 4: THE INTERPRETER
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¶13. (C) Slovakia chaired the JCG-T plus 4 on May 19. Turkey (Begec) provided a summary of its CFE consultations with Russian DFM Kislyak. Begec informed Allies that Russia had reiterated to Turkey its desire to discuss the definition of "substantial combat forces," accession terms for the Baltic countries and Slovenia, and reductions in the ceilings of NATO States Parties. In addition Russia also wanted to eliminate its limitations in the flanks. Russia told Turkey that it wanted all of Russia to be a "flank country." Begec told Allies that Turkey remained firm with Russia by reiterating Allies position as detailed in the 28 March NAC Statement on CFE.

¶14. (C) Germany (Richter) raised the issue of Russian General Balyuevskiy's recent public statements on expanding the "flank" area to all of Russia territory within the AoA. Turkey noted that Balyuevskiy said the same to Turkey while in Ankara. Richter mused about the consequences of such an action: lack of potential reinforcement over a Basic Temporary Deployment and the need to negotiate with other "flank" States Parties for upward movement of ceilings.

¶15. (C) In anticipation of Russia's discussion of the March 28 NAC Statement in the JCG, Richter suggested that Allies be prepared to discuss details of the statement - interpreting what each NATO promised action/step meant - to convince Russia that the NAC statement was a serious offer. He stated that "CFE is at stake; our job is to keep it alive." The UK commented that there was no need to convince Russia that the Allied offer is genuine since it had come from top political leaders. Richter suggested discussion of commonly used Treaty terms such as headroom, temporary deployment, stationing, and ceilings, and offered to brief the JCG on the origin of the term "substantial combat forces" in order to increase the participants' understanding of the concept. Turkey, the UK, Romania, and the U.S. opposed Germany's suggestion, stating that such discussion should stay in the JCG-T only to ensure all agreed to the definitions. After much discussion, there was general agreement to avoid any detailed discussion and to voice general support for the March 28 NAC statement. Greece (Sourani) reminded Allies that Greece had no intention of lowering its A/CFE Territorial Ceiling and that if any Ally stated otherwise in the JCG, Greece would have to object.

¶16. (C) Allies agreed to continue with the JCG meetings as scheduled in order not to send the "wrong" political signal to Russia. That said, all agreed that the meetings could be canceled for practical reasons, e.g., the June 24 JCG meeting due to the HLTF in Brussels).

¶17. (SBU) The next JCG-T plus 4 will be on May 26. The next JCG will be on May 27 under Italian Chairmanship.
FINLEY